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QUASAR
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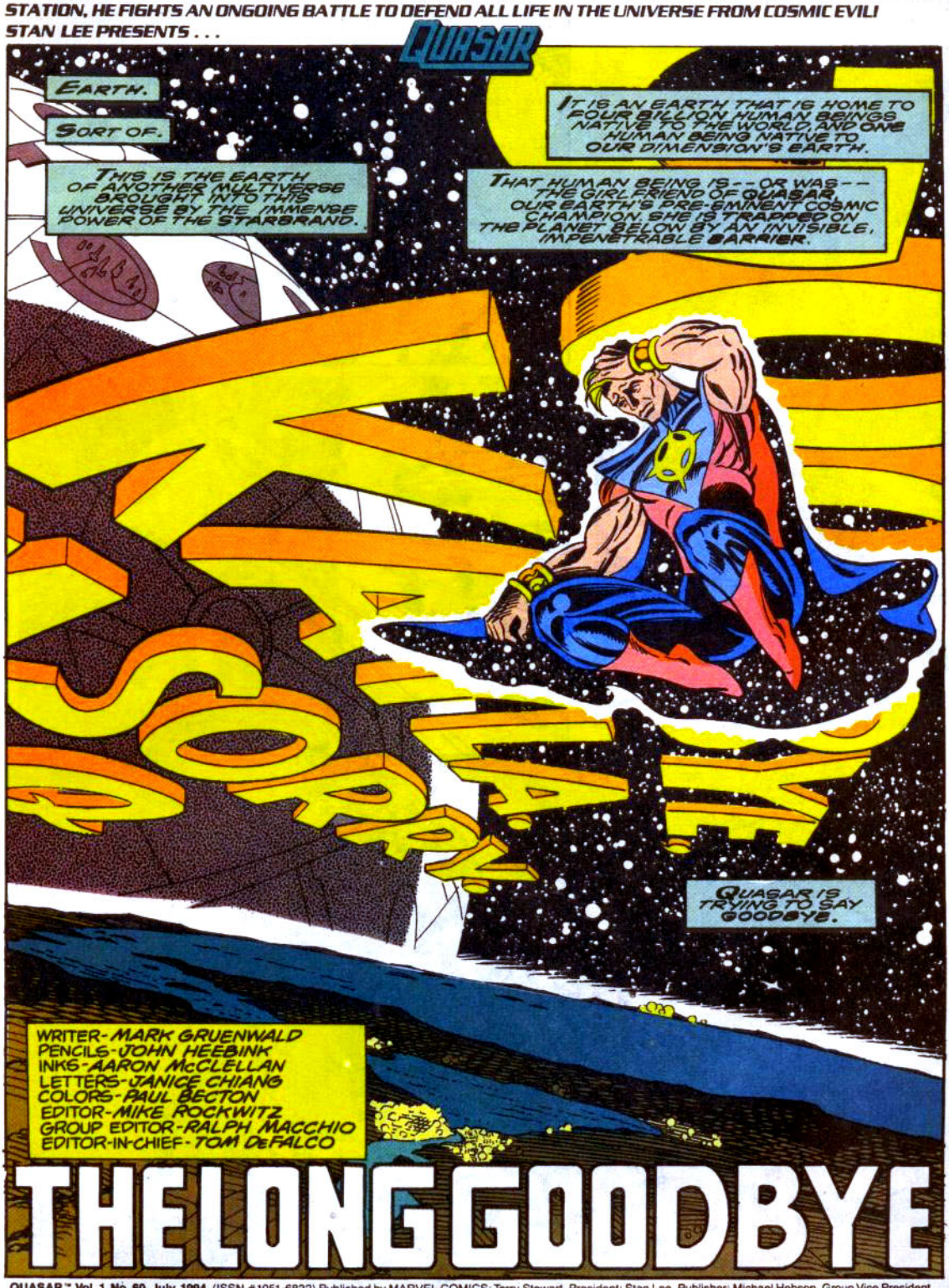
FEARLESS FINAL ISSUE!
THE LONG GOOD-BYE!
DIRECT EDITION
HEBBINK

WENDELL VAUGHN . . . THE FIRST EARTH MAN EVER APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. BONDED TO THE ENERGY-TRANSFORMING QUANTUM-BANDS THAT ARE BOTH WEAPONS AND SYMBOLS OF HIS STATION, HE FIGHTS AN ONGOING BATTLE TO DEFEND ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE FROM COSMIC EVIL!

STAN LEE PRESENTS . . .


QUASAR
EARTH.
SORT OF.
THIS IS THE EARTH OF ANOTHER MULTIVERSE BROUGHT INTO THIS UNIVERSE BY THE IMMENSE POWER OF THE STARBRAND.
IT IS AN EARTH THAT IS HOME TO FOUR BILLION HUMAN BEINGS NATIVE TO THE WORLD, AND ONE HUMAN BEING NATIVE TO OUR DIMENSION'S EARTH.
THAT HUMAN BEING IS -- OR WAS -- THE GIRLFRIEND OF QUASAR, OUR EARTH'S PRE-EMINENT COSMIC CHAMPION. SHE IS TRAPPED ON THE PLANET BELOW BY AN INVISIBLE, IMPENETRABLE BARRIER.
QUASAR IS TRYING TO SAY GOODBYE.
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THE LONG GOODBYE

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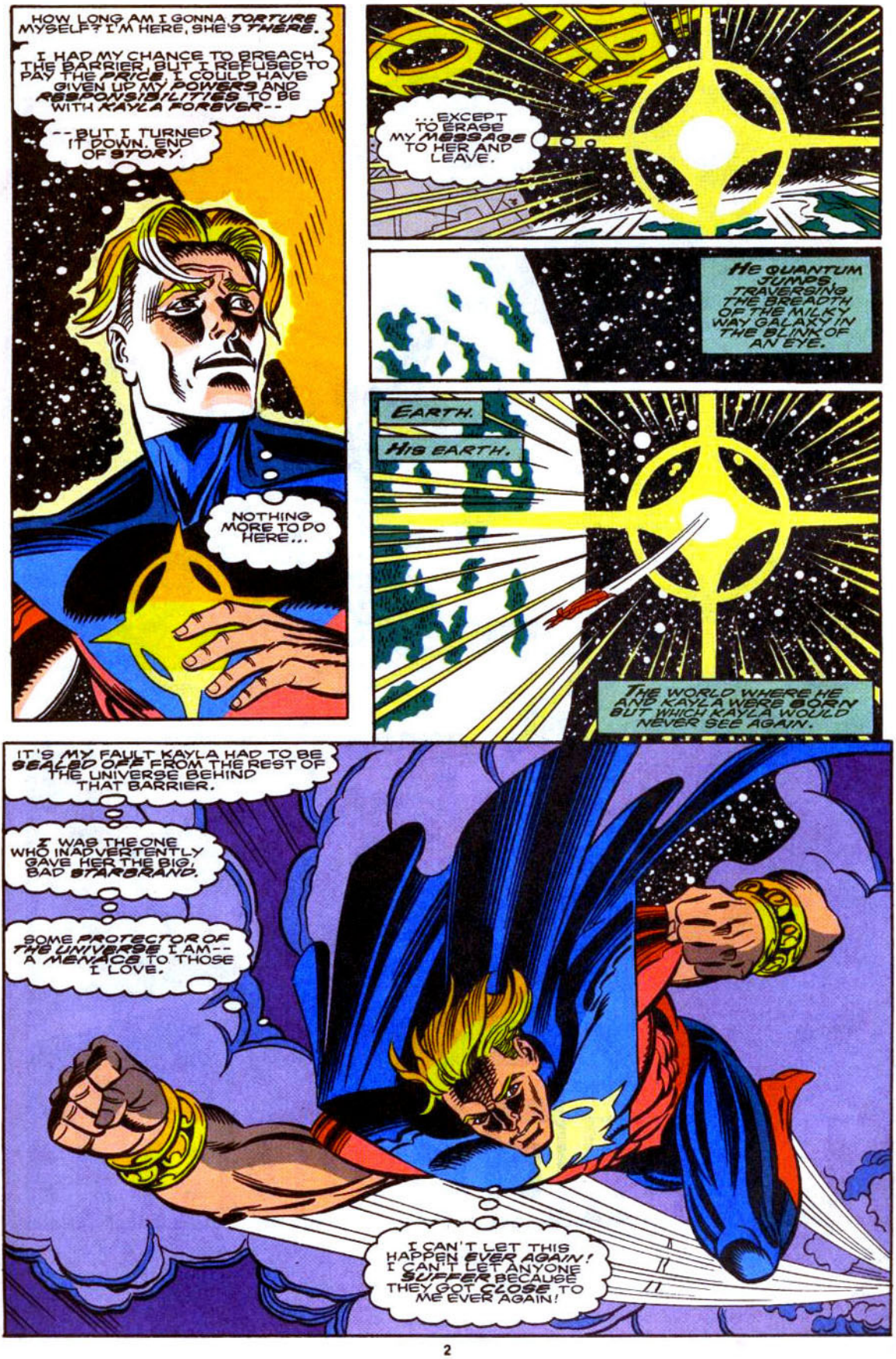
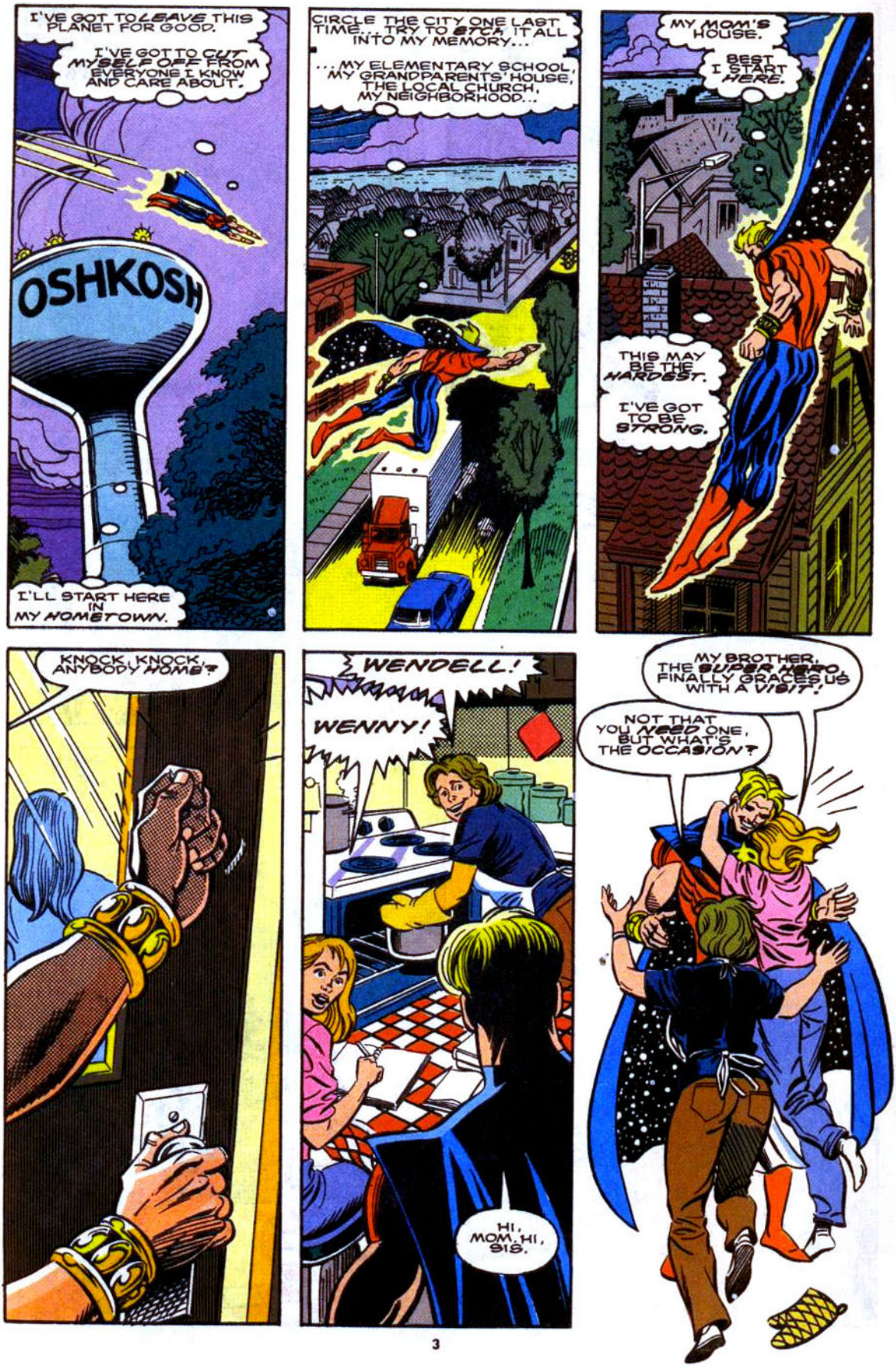
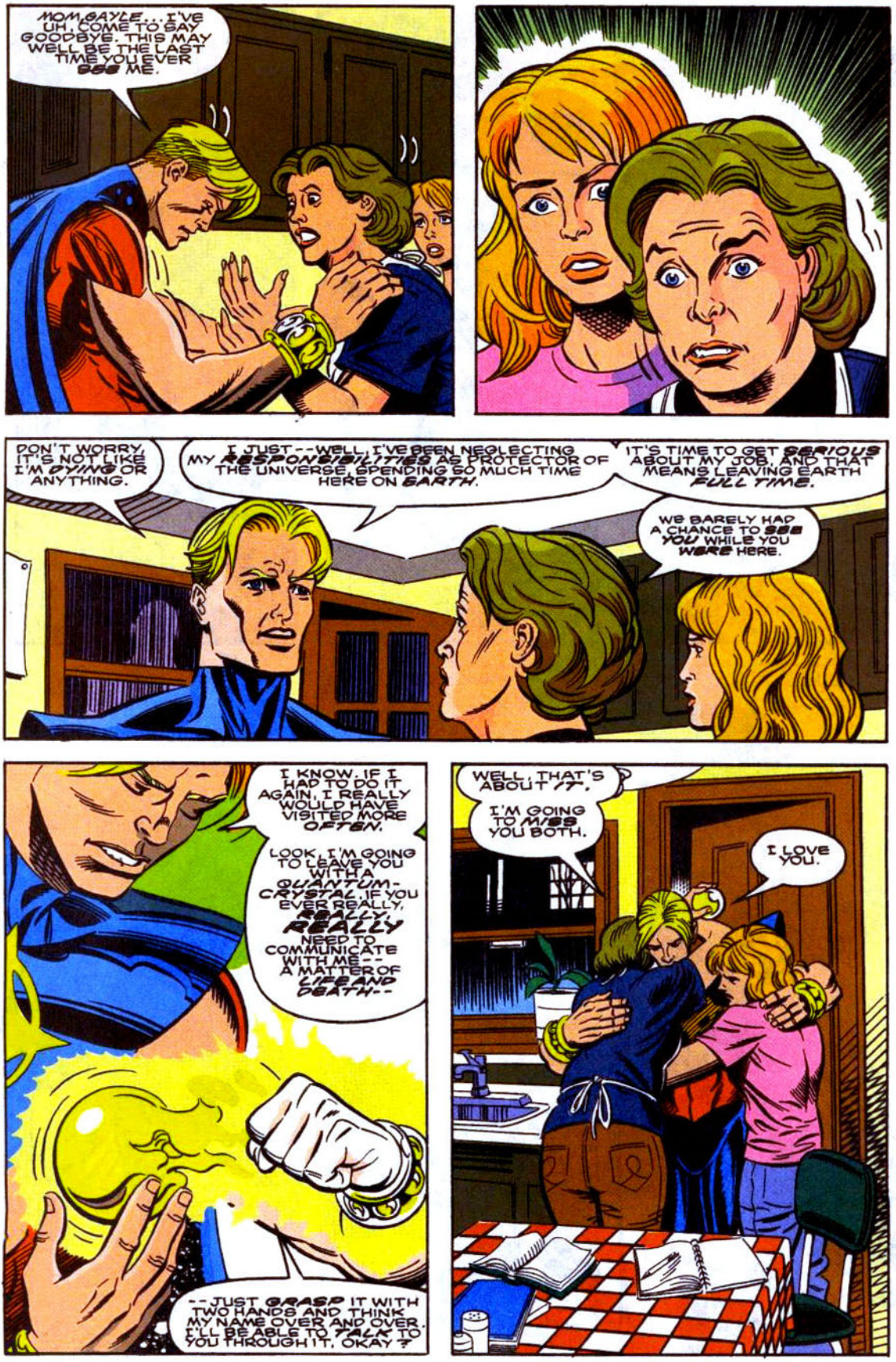

HOW LONG AM I GONNA TORTURE MYSELF? I'M HERE, SHE'S THERE.
I HAD MY CHANCE TO BREACH THE BARRIER, BUT I REFUSED TO PAY THE PRICE. I COULD HAVE GIVEN UP MY POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO BE WITH KAYLA FOREVER--
--BUT I TURNED IT DOWN. END OF STORY.
NOTHING MORE TO DO HERE...
...EXCEPT TO ERASE MY MESSAGE TO HER AND LEAVE.
HE QUANTUM JUMPS, TRAVERSING THE BREADTH OF THE MILKY WAY GALAXY IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
EARTH.
HIS EARTH.
THE WORLD WHERE HE AND KAYLA WERE BORN BUT WHICH KAYLA WOULD NEVER SEE AGAIN.
IT'S MY FAULT KAYLA HAD TO BE SEALED OFF FROM THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE BEHIND THAT BARRIER.
I WAS THE ONE WHO INADVERTENTLY GAVE HER THE BIG, BAD STARBRAND.
SOME PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE I AM-- A MENACE TO THOSE I LOVE.
I CAN'T LET THIS HAPPEN EVER AGAIN! I CAN'T LET ANYONE SUFFER BECAUSE THEY GOT CLOSE TO ME EVER AGAIN!


I'VE GOT TO LEAVE THIS PLANET FOR GOOD.
I'VE GOT TO CUT MYSELF OFF FROM EVERYONE I KNOW AND CARE ABOUT.
OSHKOSH
I'LL START HERE IN MY HOMETOWN.
CIRCLE THE CITY ONE LAST TIME... TRY TO STICK IT ALL INTO MY MEMORY...
...MY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MY GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE, THE LOCAL CHURCH, MY NEIGHBORHOOD...
MY MOM'S HOUSE.
BEST I START HERE.
THIS MAY BE THE HARDEST.
I'VE GOT TO BE STRONG.
KNOCK, KNOCK, ANYBODY HOME?
WENDELL!
WENNY!
HI, MOM. HI, SIS.
MY BROTHER, THE SUPER HERO, FINALLY GRACES US WITH A VISIT!
NOT THAT YOU NEED ONE, BUT WHAT'S THE OCCASION?


MOM, GAYLE... I'VE UH, COME TO SAY GOODBYE. THIS MAY WELL BE THE LAST TIME YOU EVER SEE ME.
DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M DYING OR ANYTHING.
I JUST--WELL, I'VE BEEN NEGLECTING MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE, SPENDING SO MUCH TIME HERE ON EARTH.
IT'S TIME TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT MY JOB, AND THAT MEANS LEAVING EARTH FULL TIME.
WE BARELY HAD A CHANCE TO SEE YOU WHILE YOU WERE HERE.
I KNOW, IF I HAD TO DO IT AGAIN, I REALLY WOULD HAVE VISITED MORE OFTEN.
LOOK, I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU WITH A QUANTUM-CRYSTAL. IF YOU EVER REALLY, REALLY, REALLY NEED TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME--A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH--
--JUST GRASP IT WITH TWO HANDS AND THINK MY NAME OVER AND OVER. I'LL BE ABLE TO TALK TO YOU THROUGH IT, OKAY?
WELL, THAT'S ABOUT IT.
I'M GOING TO MISS YOU BOTH.
I LOVE YOU.

THAT RIPPED ME APART.
BETTER PULL MYSELF TOGETHER BEFORE I DO THE NEXT ONE.
KHYSSTM, RUSSIA...
THE STRONGHOLD OF THE EMINENT SCIENTIST, BERGEI KRYLOV, BETTER KNOWN AS THE PRESENCE...
...HIS DAUGHTER LAYNIA, ALIAS DARKSTAR...
...AND HIS WIFE TANIA, ALSO CALLED STARLIGHT...
<MY SON...! DEAD...! I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO ACCEPT IT...>*
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN. --RUSHWITZ

<I KILLED THE ALIEN WHO DID IT TO MIKHAIL, FATHER... BUT SOMEHOW IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE ENOUGH!>

<AND HOW CAME YOU AND MIKHAIL TO FIGHTING THIS ALIEN?>

<THE AMERICAN--QUASAR--RECRUITED US TO HELP HIM BATTLE SOME ALIENS WHO--!>*

*AS SHOWN IN THE STARBLAST LIMITED SERIES --ROCKBLAST

QUASAR!

<ONCE AGAIN I HEAR HIS ACCURSED NAME!>*

<I...DID NOT KNOW YOU KNEW HIM FATHER!>

<USE YOUR DARKFORCE POWER, LAYNIA. IT IS TIME FOR RETRIBUTION.>

<TALIA, WAIT HERE. IF WE ARE NOT BACK IN 24 HOURS, IT MEANS QUASAR VANQUISHED US. AT THAT TIME, YOU WILL FIND QUASAR'S FAMILY AND KILL THEM.>

<YES, SERGEI.>

<OH, YES. ALL TOO WELL.>

<HE PROBABLY PLANNED TO HAVE MIKHAIL SLAIN JUST TO GET BACK AT ME!>

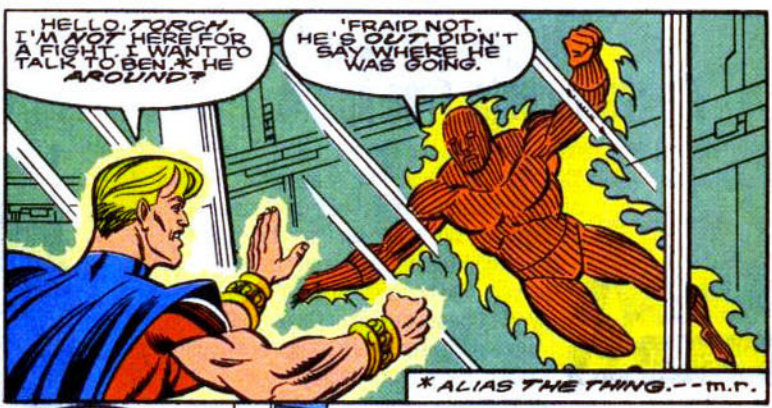
<I'M NOT SURE HE KNEW YOU WERE RELATED, BUT I AGREE WITH YOU THAT QUASAR IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS! HE WAS THE ONE WHO RECRUITED MIKHAIL AND ME!>

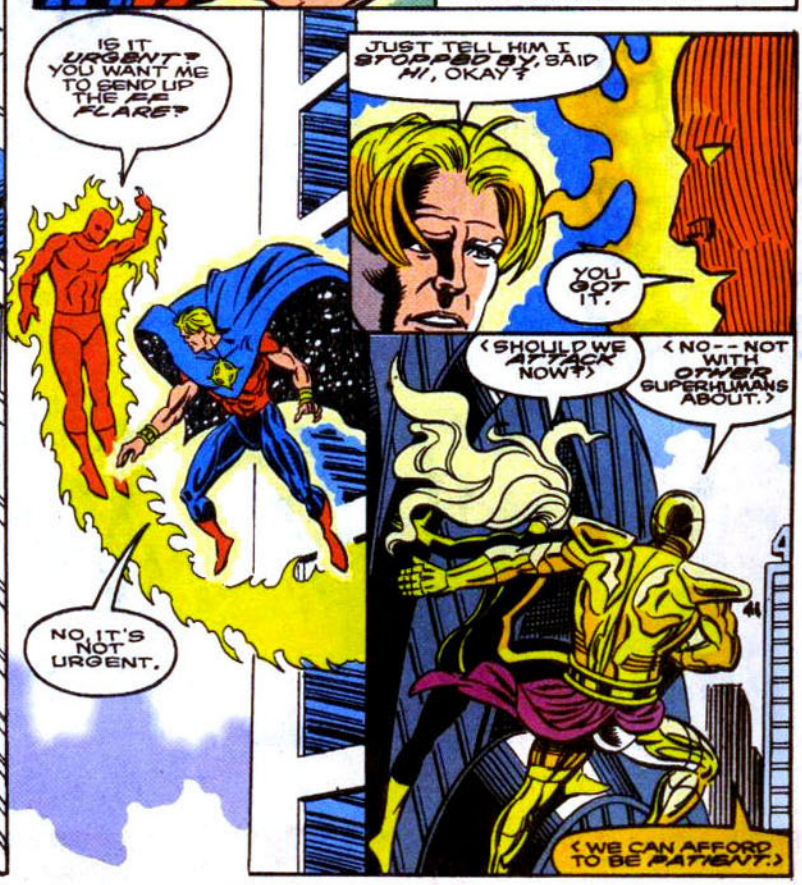
*QUAS MET PREG IN ISSUE #20 AND #45-46! --INFOMIKE

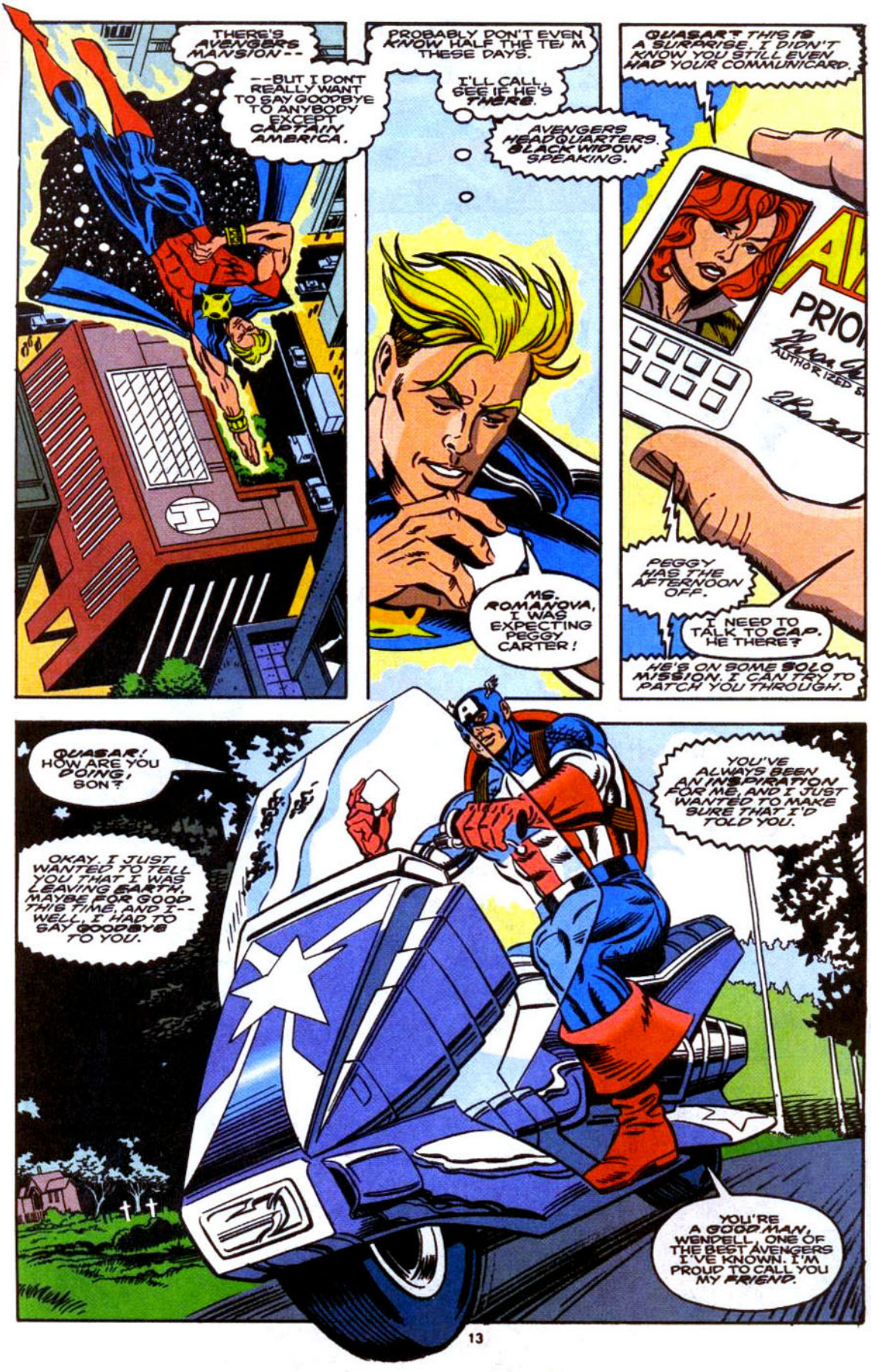
NEW YORK CITY...
NEXT STOP FOUR FREEDOMS PLAZA, THIRTEENTH FLOOR...
...HEADQUARTERS OF VAUGHN-TANAKA SECURITY CONSULTANTS, AND MY CLOSEST FRIEND...
KEN!
HUH?
WEND--I MEAN QUASAR!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE--AS QUASAR? PHIL AND BRENNA ARE GOING TO SUSPECT THAT YOU'RE THE COMPANY FOUNDER!
DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE, KEN.
KAYLA'S NOT COMING BACK. I LOST HER ON AN ALIEN WORLD AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT.
HER FAMILY CALLS HER EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE. WHAT SHOULD I TELL THEM?
DON'T WORRY. I'LL SEE THEM BEFORE I GO. I'M LEAVING FOR GOOD THIS TIME, KEN.
BRENNA... PHIL... IF KEN HIRED YOU, I KNOW YOU MUST BE THE BEST. TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE COMPANY.
I WISH I'D HAD THE CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER.
ME, TOO.
GOODBYE, BUDDY. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
I--UH--YOU, TOO!

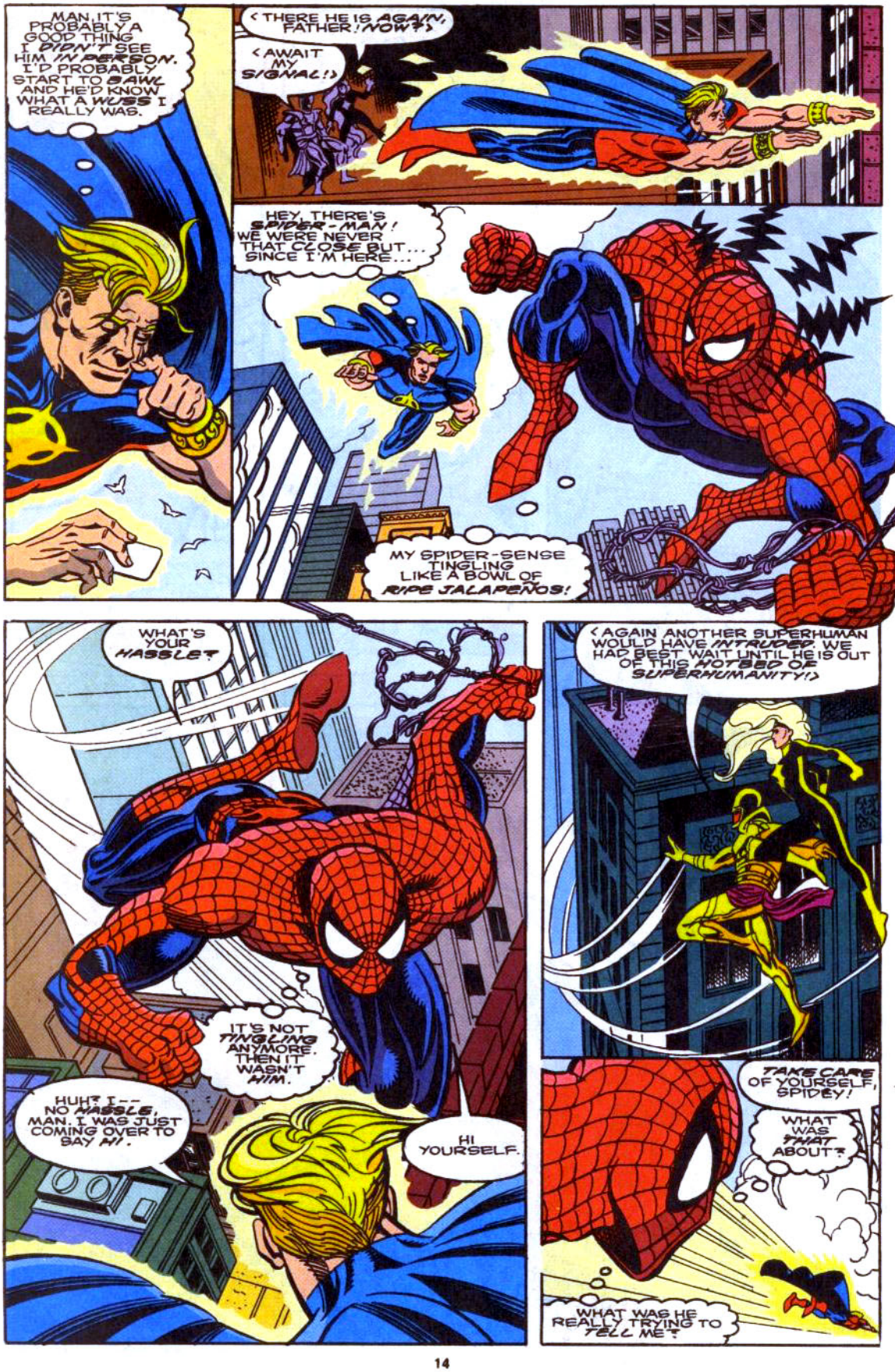
WELL, I'D BEST BE--
WHOA! NOVA!*
YEAH. HE MUST DO WORK AROUND HERE OR SOMETHING. I SEE HIM ZIPPING AROUND A LOT.
*STAR OF HIS OWN MONTHLY BOOK.--PLUGWITZ

I DON'T KNOW HIM ALL THAT WELL. I'LL SPARE HIM A FAREWELL.
NOK NOK
BUT I REALLY WANT TO SAY GOODBYE TO BEN AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR WHILE I'M HERE.

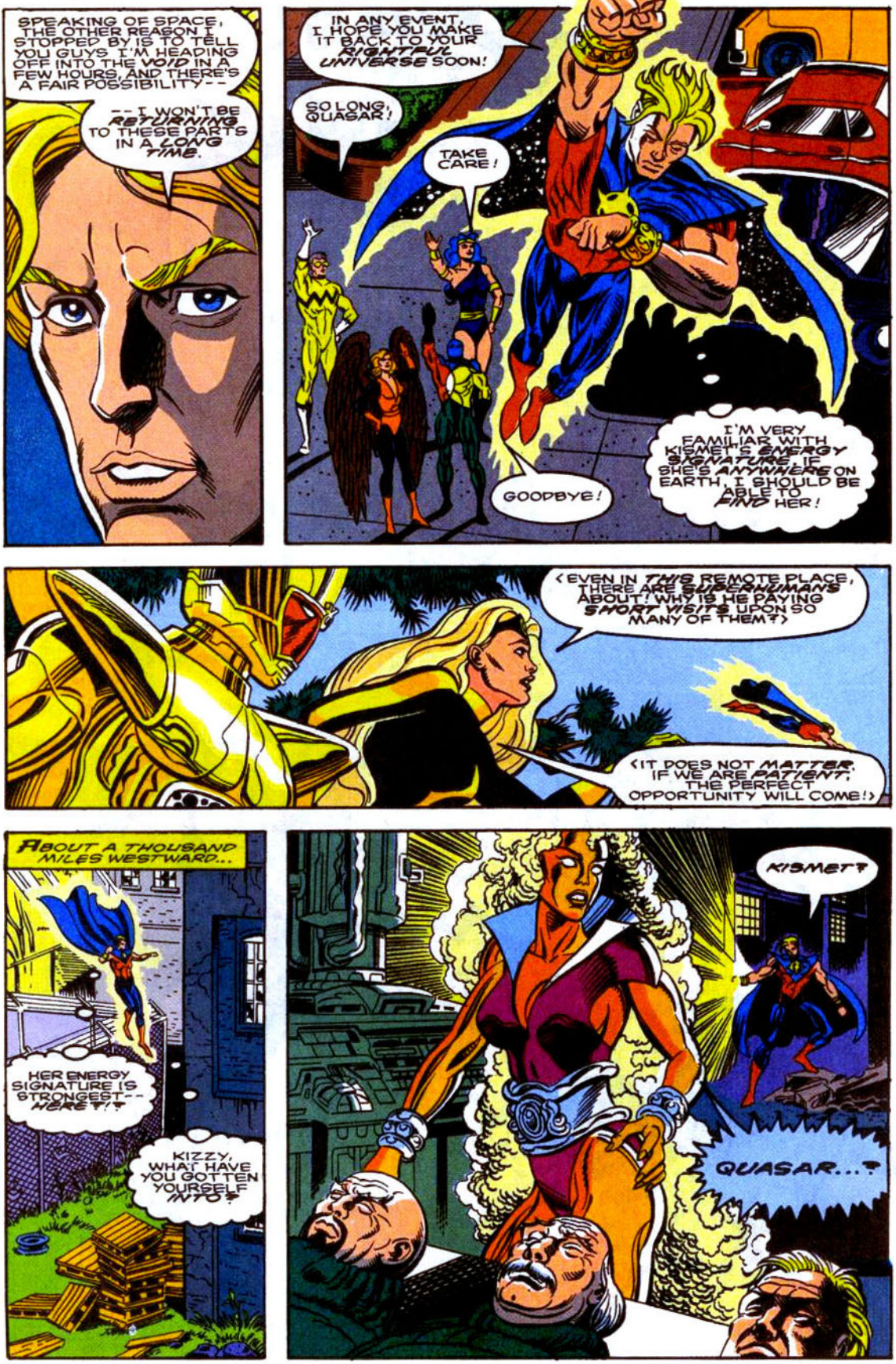

HELLO, TORCH. I'M NOT HERE FOR A FIGHT. I WANT TO TALK TO BEN.* HE AROUND?
'FRAID NOT. HE'S OUT. DIDN'T SAY WHERE HE WAS GOING.
*ALIAS THE THING.--M.F.


IS IT URGENT? YOU WANT ME TO SEND UP THE FF FLARE?
NO, IT'S NOT URGENT.
JUST TELL HIM I STOPPED BY, SAID HI, OKAY?
YOU GOT IT.
<SHOULD WE ATTACK NOW?>
<NO--NOT WITH OTHER SUPERHUMANS ABOUT.>
<WE CAN AFFORD TO BE PATIENT.>


THERE'S AVENGERS MANSION--
--BUT I DON'T REALLY WANT TO SAY GOODBYE TO ANYBODY EXCEPT CAPTAIN AMERICA.
PROBABLY DON'T EVEN KNOW HALF THE TEAM THESE DAYS.
I'LL CALL, SEE IF HE'S THERE.
AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS. BLACK WIDOW SPEAKING.
MS. ROMANOVA, I WAS EXPECTING PEGGY CARTER!
QUASAR! THIS IS A SURPRISE. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU STILL EVEN HAD YOUR COMMUNICARD.
PEGGY HAS THE AFTERNOON OFF.
I NEED TO TALK TO CAP. HE THERE?
HE'S ON SOME SOLO MISSION. I CAN TRY TO PATCH YOU THROUGH.
QUASAR! HOW ARE YOU DOING, SON?
OKAY. I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT I WAS LEAVING EARTH, MAYBE FOR GOOD THIS TIME. AND I-- WELL, I HAD TO SAY GOODBYE TO YOU.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN AN INSPIRATION FOR ME, AND I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT I'D TOLD YOU.
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, WENDELL. ONE OF THE BEST AVENGERS I'VE KNOWN. I'M PROUD TO CALL YOU MY FRIEND.


MAN, IT'S PROBABLY A GOOD THING I DIDN'T SEE HIM IN PERSON. I'D PROBABLY START TO BAWL AND HE'D KNOW WHAT A WUSS I REALLY WAS.
<THERE HE IS AGAIN, FATHER! NOW?>
<AWAIT MY SIGNAL!>
HEY, THERE'S SPIDER-MAN! WE WERE NEVER THAT CLOSE BUT... SINCE I'M HERE...
MY SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING LIKE A BOWL OF RIPE JALAPEÑOS!
WHAT'S YOUR HASSLE?
IT'S NOT TINGLING ANYMORE. THEN IT WASN'T HIM.
HUH? I-- NO HASSLE, MAN. I WAS JUST COMING OVER TO SAY HI.
HI YOURSELF.
<AGAIN ANOTHER SUPERHUMAN WOULD HAVE INTRUDED. WE HAD BEST WAIT UNTIL HE IS OUT OF THIS HOTBED OF SUPERHUMANITY!>
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, SPIDEY!
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
WHAT WAS HE REALLY TRYING TO TELL ME?

UPSTATE NEW YORK...
PROJECT: PEGASUS...
...I CAN SAY GOODBYE TO BOTH THE SQUADRON AND KISMET ALL IN ONE STOP.
INSIDE...
QUASAR!NO! WHAT BRINGS YOU--BESIDES QUANTUM ENERGY, OF COURSE?
WELL, FOR STARTERS, I WANTED TO CHECK UP ON KISMET'S COCOON.
HER CO--OH, NO! I THOUGHT YOU'D BEEN NOTIFIED.
OF WHAT?
HER COCOON WAS... WELL, ABDUCTED ABOUT TWO DAYS AGO!*
*ISSUE #57.--ROCOON
ABDUCTED?
HOW, DID IT HAPPEN? WHO DID IT? HAVE YOU SEARCHED FOR HER?
WHOA
WHOA
WHOA!
QUASAR! YOU BEAT HYPERION BACK FROM YOUR SPACE MISSION!*
I JUST HEARD FROM HIM. SOME ALIENS NAMED THE SHI'AR ARE GOING TO BE DROPPING HIM OFF ON EARTH WITHIN THE WEEK.
*SHE MEANS THE STARBLAST SAGA.--MOON ROCK


SPEAKING OF SPACE, THE OTHER REASON I STOPPED BY IS TO TELL YOU GUYS I'M HEADING OFF INTO THE VOID IN A FEW HOURS, AND THERE'S A FAIR POSSIBILITY--
--I WON'T BE RETURNING TO THESE PARTS IN A LONG TIME.
IN ANY EVENT, I HOPE YOU MAKE IT BACK TO YOUR RIGHTFUL UNIVERSE SOON!
SO LONG, QUASAR!
TAKE CARE!
GOODBYE!
I'M VERY FAMILIAR WITH KISMET'S ENERGY SIGNATURE. IF SHE'S ANYWHERE ON EARTH, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND HER!
<EVEN IN THIS REMOTE PLACE, THERE ARE SUPERHUMANS ABOUT! WHY IS HE PAYING SHORT VISITS UPON SO MANY OF THEM?>
<IT DOES NOT MATTER. IF WE ARE PATIENT, THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY WILL COME!>
ABOUT A THOUSAND MILES WESTWARD...
HER ENERGY SIGNATURE IS STRONGEST--HERE?!?
KIZZY, WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO?
KISMET?
QUASAR...?

WOW, YOU LOOK *DIFFERENT*-- GREAT, BUT DIFFERENT! WHAT *HAPPENED*?

I RECOVERED FROM THE *WOUNDS* INCURRED AT THE HANDS OF YOUR *WOMAN FRIEND*, AND EMERGED FROM MY COCOON IN THIS SLIGHTLY *ALTERED STATE*.

I SEE. SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING *HERE*?

I AM WAITING FOR MY *FATHERS* TO REVIVE. I HAVE PLACED THEM IN RESUSCITIVE COCOONS.

YOUR FATHERS?!?

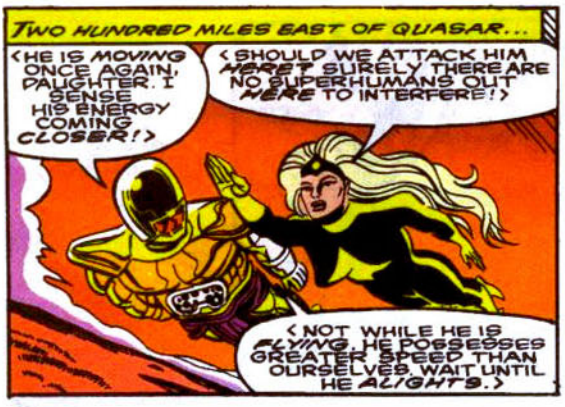
YES. THE MEN WHO GREW ME IN A *TEST TUBE*.

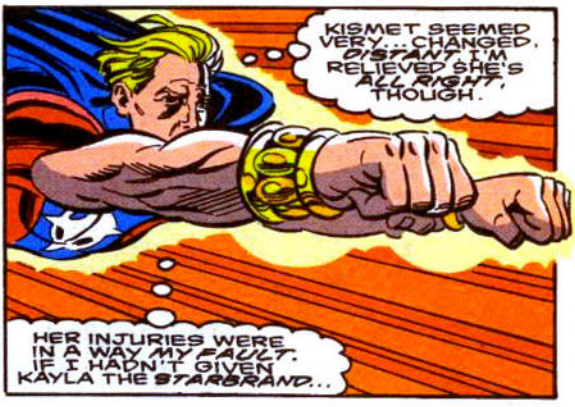
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU'RE OKAY. I WAS VERY SORRY ABOUT WHAT *HAPPENED* TO YOU... I HOPE YOU DIDN'T THINK I *ABANDONED* YOU.

ANYWAY, I'M GOING BACK OUT INTO *SPACE* AGAIN. I'D LIKE YOU TO COME *ALONG*, IF YOU'D LIKE.

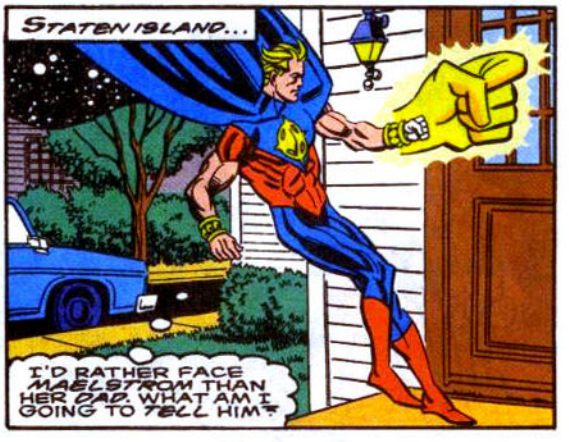
THANK YOU, BUT *NO*. I AM GOING TO WAIT FOR MY FATHERS TO *REVIVE* BEFORE DECIDING WHAT *NEXT* TO DO.

THEN I... GUESS THIS IS *GOODBYE*.


TWO HUNDRED MILES EAST OF QUASAR...
<HE IS MOVING ONCE AGAIN, DAUGHTER. I SENSE HIS ENERGY COMING CLOSER!>
<SHOULD WE ATTACK HIM HERE? SURELY THERE ARE NO SUPERHUMANS OUT HERE TO INTERFERE!>
<NOT WHILE HE IS FLYING. HE POSSESSES GREATER SPEED THAN OURSELVES. WAIT UNTIL HE ALIGHTS.>


KISMET SEEMED VERY... CHANGED. DISTANT. I'M RELIEVED SHE'S ALL RIGHT, THOUGH.
HER INJURIES WERE IN A WAY MY FAULT. IF I HADN'T GIVEN KAYLA THE STARBRAND...

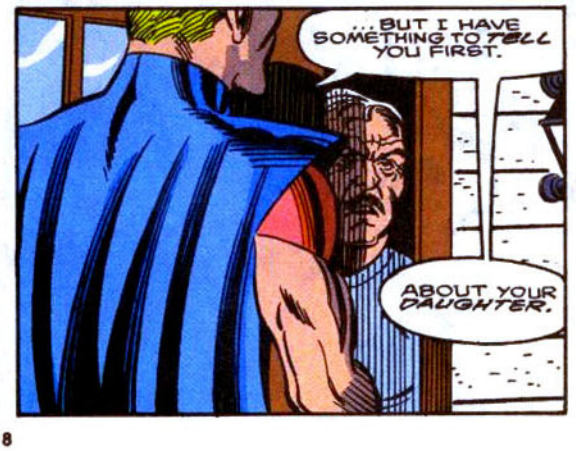
KAYLA. I LEFT THE HARDEST STOP TILL LAST.
HER FAMILY'S HOUSE.


STATEN ISLAND...
I'D RATHER FACE MAELSTROM THAN HER DAD. WHAT AM I GOING TO TELL HIM?

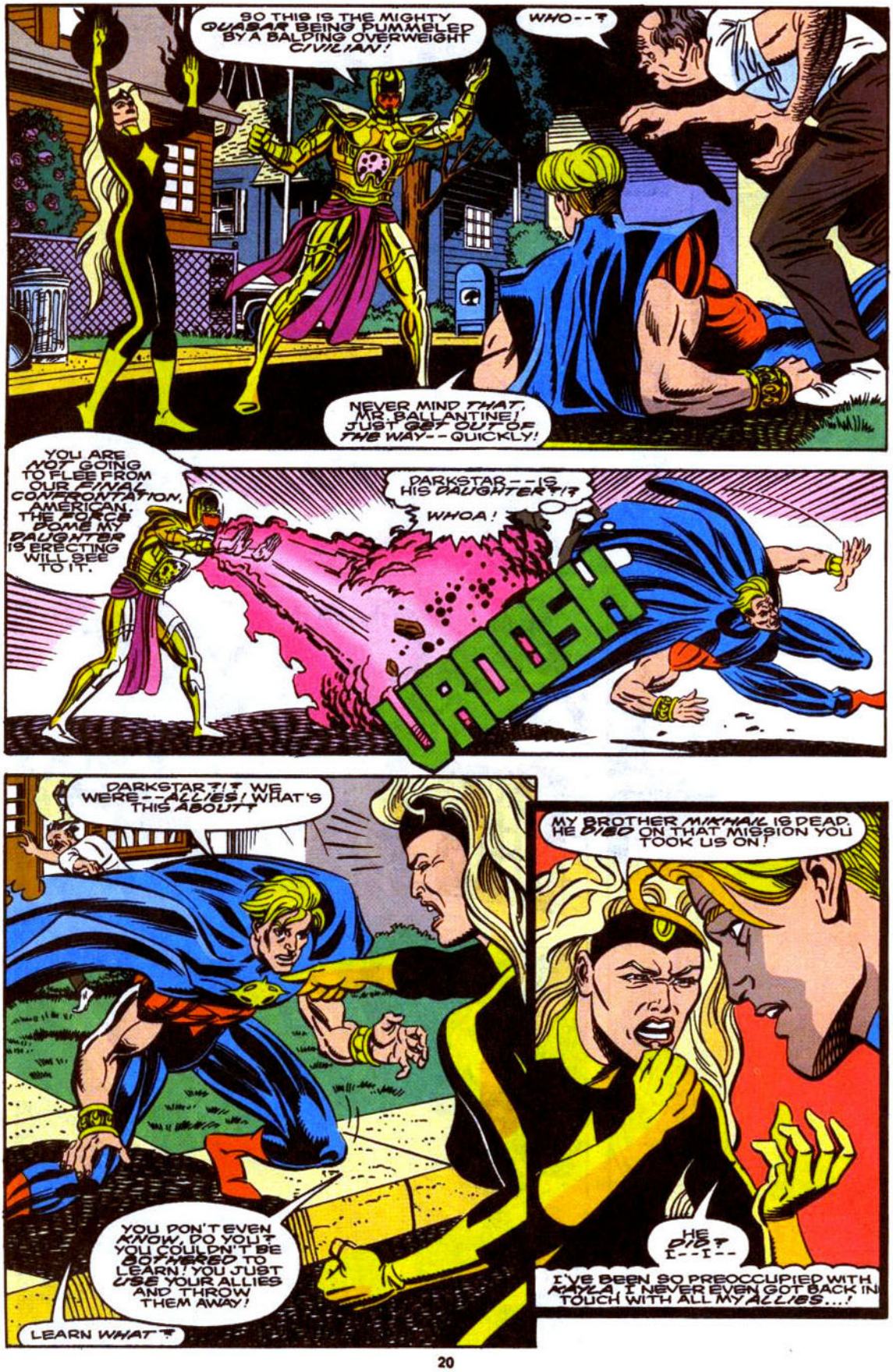
MAYBE HE WON'T BE--
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU S'POSED TO BE?

A FRIEND OF YOUR DAUGHTER'S-- QUASAR. I USED TO BE AN AVEN--
I AIN'T GOT NO DAUGHTER--I THREW HER OUT!
NOW GO AWAY!

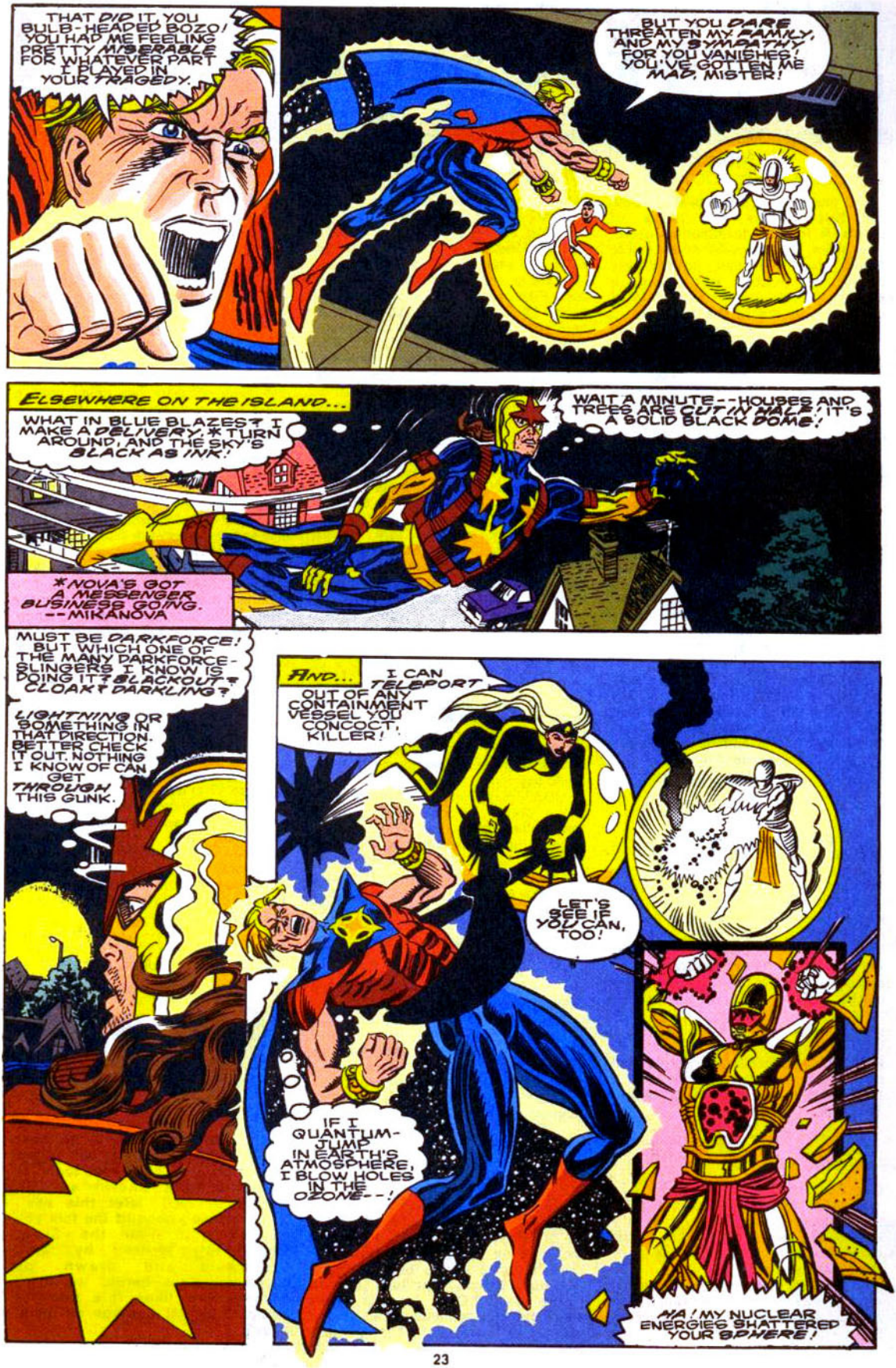
I WILL, SIR...

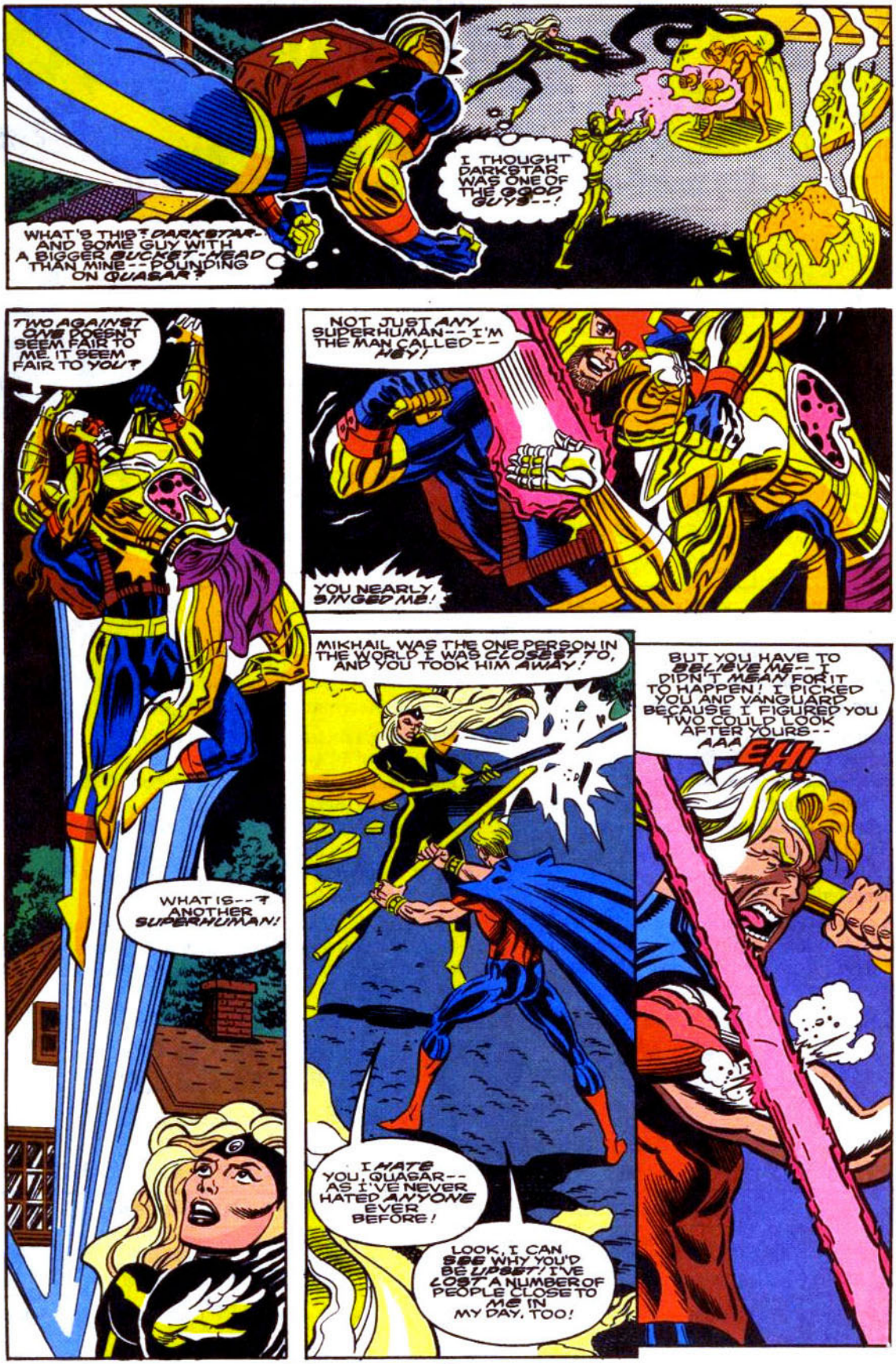

...BUT I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU FIRST.
ABOUT YOUR DAUGHTER.

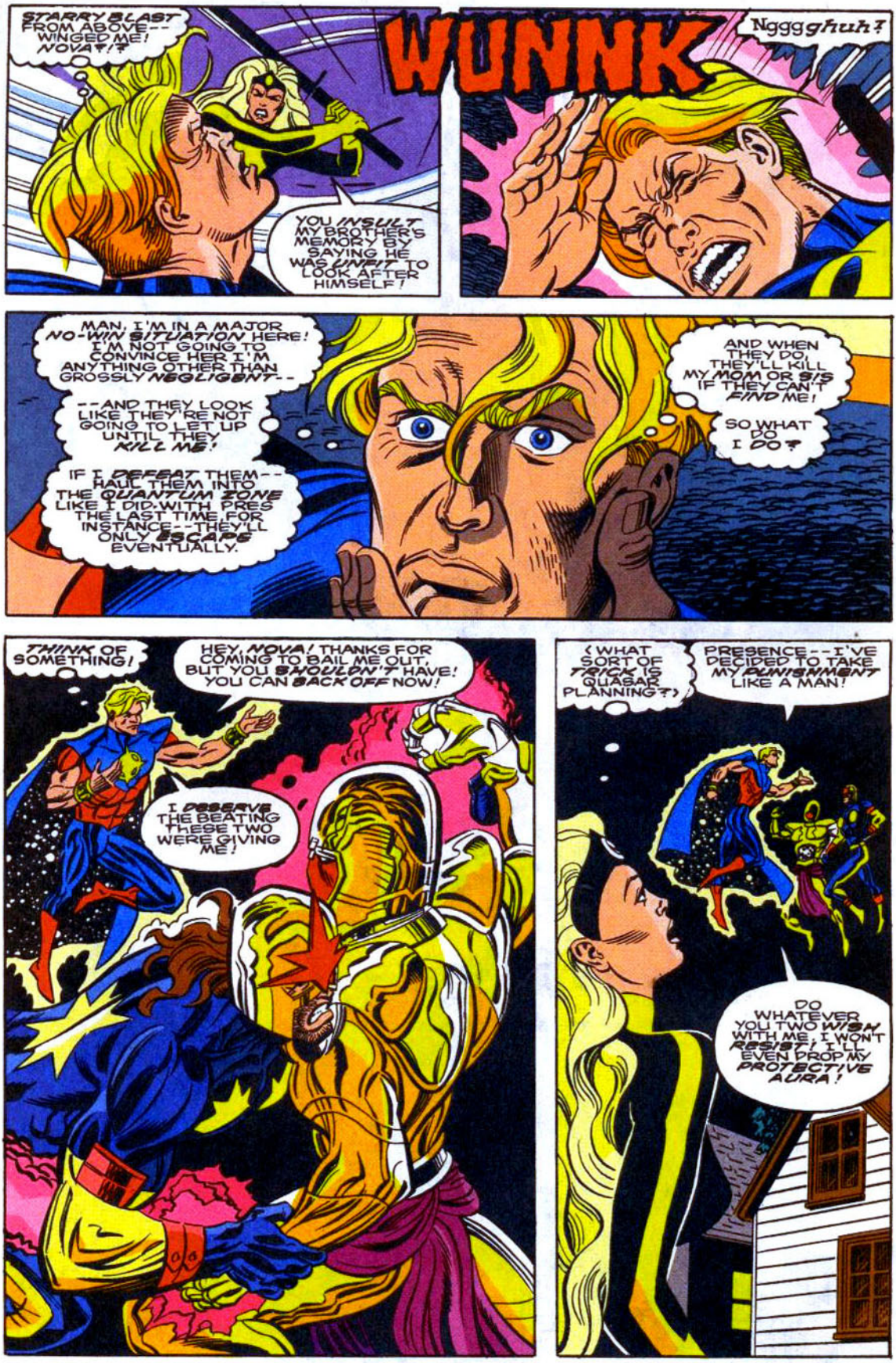
YOUR DAUGHTER'S NOT GOING TO COME HOME AGAIN, SIR. EVER. SHE'S ON ANOTHER WORLD AND THERE'S NOT A FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE STRONG ENOUGH TO GET HER FREE!
WHAT? WHAT KINDA COCK'N'BULL STORY, IS THAT?
MY BABY AIN'T COMIN' HOME NO MORE--YOU FILTHY SON OF A-- YOU MURDERED MY LITTLE GIRL, DIN'T YA?
NO, SIR, I DIDN'T.
BUT I AM TO BLAME FOR--
MURDERER!
I'LL KILL YOU FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE!
I WANT MY BABY BACK!
THERE'S A MILLION WAYS I COULD STOP HIM, BUT...
...I THINK HE'S ENTITLED TO TAKE OUT HIS RAGE ON ME!
LET US HELP YOU, COMRADE!
HNNH?


SO THIS IS THE MIGHTY QUASAR BEING PUMMELED BY A BALDING OVERWEIGHT CIVILIAN!
WHO--?
NEVER MIND THAT, MR. BALLANTINE! JUST GET OUT OF THE WAY--QUICKLY!
YOU ARE NOT GOING TO FLEE FROM OUR FINAL CONFRONTATION, AMERICAN. THE FORCE DOME MY DAUGHTER IS ERECTING WILL SEE TO IT.
DARKSTAR--IS HIS DAUGHTER?!?
WHOA!
URDOSH
DARKSTAR?! WE WERE--ALLIES! WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW, DO YOU? YOU COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO LEARN! YOU JUST USE YOUR ALLIES AND THROW THEM AWAY!
LEARN WHAT?
MY BROTHER MIKHAIL IS DEAD. HE DIED ON THAT MISSION YOU TOOK US ON!
HE DIED? I--I--
I'VE BEEN SO PREOCCUPIED WITH KWYLA, I NEVER EVEN GOT BACK IN TOUCH WITH ALL MY ALLIES...!

I'M SO SORRY, DARKSTAR. YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME. I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WOULD HAPPEN!
IT IS TOO LATE FOR APOLOGIES. IT IS TOO LATE FOR EVERYTHING SAVE VENGEANCE.
HURLING DARKFORCE AT ME -- ONE OF THE FEW THINGS MY QUANTUM-FORCE HAS NO CONTROL OVER!
MY DENSEST SHIELD BARELY STOPPED THEM!
YOU TALKED ME OUT OF REVENGING MYSELF UPON YOU ONCE BEFORE* -- AND THIS IS WHAT I GET -- YOU KILLING MY ONLY SON!
*BACK IN ISSUE #16. --ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK
I SWEAR TO YOU, SIR: I DIDN'T KNOW VANGUARD WAS YOUR SON, AND I DIDN'T MEAN FOR HIM TO DIE!
I DIDN'T FORCE HIM TO COME ALONG. HE VOLUNTEERED. TELL HIM, DARKSTAR.
HE DIED WHILE SERVING YOUR CAUSE. YOU ARE TO BLAME. YOU MUST PAY.
DO NOT THINK ABOUT ESCAPE! IF YOU FLEE, I SHALL HUNT DOWN YOUR FAMILY AND SLAY ONE OF THEM IN YOUR STEAD!


THAT DID IT, YOU BULB-HEADED BOZO! YOU HAD ME FEELING PRETTY MISERABLE FOR WHATEVER PART I PLAYED IN YOUR TRAGEDY.
BUT YOU DARE THREATEN MY FAMILY, AND MY SYMPATHY FOR YOU VANISHES! YOU'VE GOTTEN ME MAD, MISTER!
ELSEWHERE ON THE ISLAND...
WHAT IN BLUE BLAZES? I MAKE A DELIVERY, * TURN AROUND, AND THE SKY'S BLACK AS INK!
WAIT A MINUTE--HOUSES AND TREES ARE CUT IN HALF, IT'S A SOLID BLACK DOME!
*NOVA'S GOT A MESSENGER BUSINESS GOING. --MIKANOVA
MUST BE DARKFORCE! BUT WHICH ONE OF THE MANY DARKFORCE-SLINGERS I KNOW IS DOING IT? BLACKOUT? CLOAK? DARKLING?
LIGHTNING OR SOMETHING IN THAT DIRECTION. BETTER CHECK IT OUT. NOTHING I KNOW OF CAN GET THROUGH THIS GUNK.
AND... I CAN TELEPORT OUT OF ANY CONTAINMENT VESSEL YOU CONCOCT, KILLER!
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN, TOO!
IF I QUANTUM-JUMP IN EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, I BLOW HOLES IN THE OZONE--!
HA! MY NUCLEAR ENERGIES SHATTERED YOUR 9-HERE!


WHAT'S THIS? DARKSTAR- AND SOME GUY WITH A BIGGER BUCKET-HEAD THAN MINE--POUNDING ON QUASAR?
I THOUGHT DARKSTAR WAS ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS--!
TWO AGAINST ONE DOESN'T SEEM FAIR TO ME. IT SEEM FAIR TO YOU?
WHAT IS--? ANOTHER SUPERHUMAN!
NOT JUST ANY SUPERHUMAN--I'M THE MAN CALLED--NO!
YOU NEARLY SINGED ME!
MIKHAIL WAS THE ONE PERSON IN THE WORLD I WAS CLOSEST TO, AND YOU TOOK HIM AWAY!
I HATE YOU, QUASAR--AS I'VE NEVER HATED ANYONE EVER BEFORE!
LOOK, I CAN SEE WHY YOU'D BE UPSET! I'VE LOST A NUMBER OF PEOPLE CLOSE TO ME IN MY DAY, TOO!
BUT YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME--I DIDN'T MEAN FOR IT TO HAPPEN! I PICKED YOU AND VANGUARD BECAUSE I FIGURED YOU TWO COULD LOOK AFTER YOURS--
AAA
EH!


STARRY BLAST FROM ABOVE-- WINGED ME! NOVA?!?
YOU INSULT MY BROTHER'S MEMORY BY SAYING HE WAS UNFIT TO LOOK AFTER HIMSELF!
WUNNK
Nggggghuh?
MAN, I'M IN A MAJOR NO-WIN SITUATION HERE! I'M NOT GOING TO CONVINCE HER I'M ANYTHING OTHER THAN GROSSLY NEGLIGENT--
--AND THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE NOT GOING TO LET UP UNTIL THEY KILL ME!
IF I DEFEAT THEM-- HAUL THEM INTO THE QUANTUM ZONE LIKE I DID WITH PRES THE LAST TIME FOR INSTANCE-- THEY'LL ONLY ESCAPE EVENTUALLY.
AND WHEN THEY DO, THEY'LL KILL MY MOM OR SIS IF THEY CAN'T FIND ME!
SO WHAT DO I DO?
THINK OF SOMETHING!
HEY, NOVA! THANKS FOR COMING TO BAIL ME OUT, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE! YOU CAN BACK OFF NOW!
I DESERVE THE BEATING THESE TWO WERE GIVING ME!
(WHAT SORT OF TRICK IS QUASAR PLANNING?)
PRESENCE-- I'VE DECIDED TO TAKE MY PUNISHMENT LIKE A MAN!
DO WHATEVER YOU TWO WISH WITH ME, I WON'T RESIST; I'LL EVEN DROP MY PROTECTIVE AURA!

NOW, MY DAUGHTER-- WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT!!

UDOOM

EYOWW!

<WE DISINTEGRATED HIM!>

<WE MUST HAVE! HE COULD NOT HAVE *TELEPORTED AWAY* WITHOUT HIS *QUANTUM-BANDS!*>

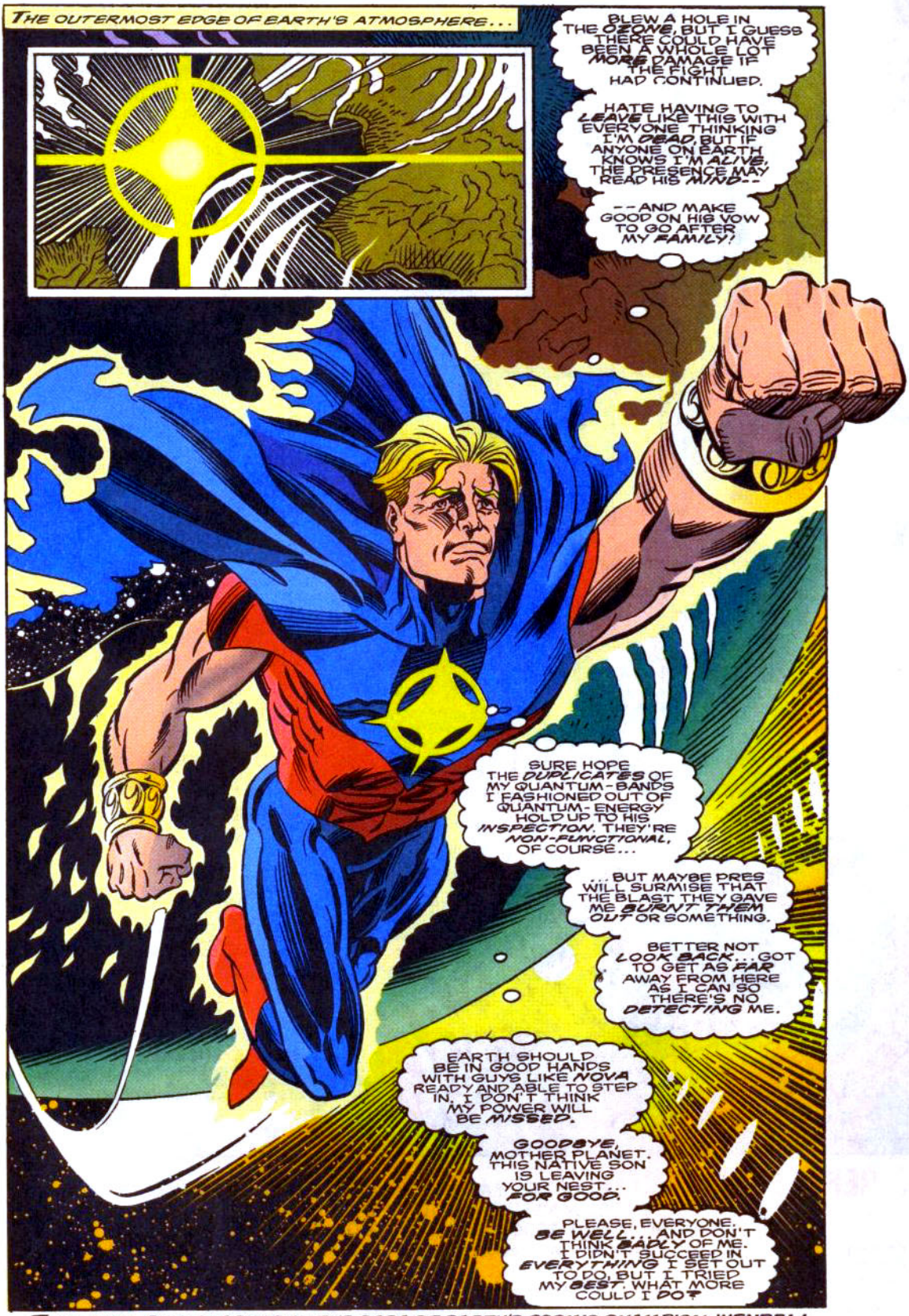
<WE'VE AVENGED *MIKHAIL!*>

QUAZE...?

YOU STINKIN' MURDERERS!

AW CRIPES--THEY BLINKED OUT IN A *DARKFORCE BURST!*

AND WITH DARKSTAR'S DISAPPEARANCE, HER DOME EVAPORATES TO REVEAL--
HEY, IT'S NOVA!
HOLEE--! THE WARRIORS--! AVENGERS--! FANTASTIC FOUR--! GUESS THIS THIRTY BLOCK BLACKOUT DIDN'T GO UNNOTICED!
WHAT HAPPENED?
QUASAR WAS JUMPED BY TWO SUPER-YAHOOS, ONE WAS DARKSTAR, THE OTHER I THINK QUASAR CALLED PRESENCE!
I'M NOT SURE--BUT I THINK THEY DISINTEGRATED HIM! THEY TOOK HIS POWER-BANDS AND BLIPPED OFF!
THE BLOND PUNK ONLY GOT WHAT WAS COMING TO HIM!
QUASAR... DEAD? IS IT POSSIBLE?


THE OUTERMOST EDGE OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE...
BLEW A HOLE IN THE OZONE, BUT I GUESS THERE COULD HAVE BEEN A WHOLE LOT MORE DAMAGE IF THE FIGHT HAD CONTINUED.
HATE HAVING TO LEAVE LIKE THIS WITH EVERYONE THINKING I'M DEAD, BUT IF ANYONE ON EARTH KNOWS I'M ALIVE, THE PRESENCE MAY READ HIS MIND--
--AND MAKE GOOD ON HIS VOW TO GO AFTER MY FAMILY!
SURE HOPE THE DUPLICATES OF MY QUANTUM-BANDS I FASHIONED OUT OF QUANTUM-ENERGY HOLD UP TO HIS INSPECTION. THEY'RE NON-FUNCTIONAL, OF COURSE...
...BUT MAYBE PRES WILL SURMISE THAT THE BLAST THEY GAVE ME BURNT THEM OUT OR SOMETHING.
BETTER NOT LOOK BACK... GOT TO GET AS FAR AWAY FROM HERE AS I CAN SO THERE'S NO DETECTING ME.
EARTH SHOULD BE IN GOOD HANDS WITH GUYS LIKE NOVA READY AND ABLE TO STEP IN. I DON'T THINK MY POWER WILL BE MISSED.
GOODBYE, MOTHER PLANET. THIS NATIVE SON IS LEAVING YOUR NEST... FOR GOOD.
PLEASE, EVERYONE, BE WELL... AND DON'T THINK BADLY OF ME. I DIDN'T SUCCEED IN EVERYTHING I SET OUT TO DO, BUT I TRIED MY BEST. WHAT MORE COULD I DO?

THUS ENDS THIS CHAPTER IN THE SAGA OF EARTH'S COSMIC CHAMPION, **WENDELL VAUGHN**, SON OF GILBERT AND LISA VAUGHN, EX-SHIELD AGENT, EX-AVENGER, FORMER PROTEGE OF EON, AND APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. THE NEXT CHAPTER WILL BE WRIT TEN IN THE STARS.